

Remarks

Allowed Claims. Claims 1-12 are allowed.

Acceptance of Drawings. The Office Action inadvertently omitted checking box 10(a) or box 10(b) indicating whether the drawings filed with the application are accepted by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests the appropriate box be checked.

Amendment to Claim 1.

Claim 1 is amended herein to improve the form of the claim and not for reasons of patentability. The amendment is not intended to narrow the scope of the claim nor is it intended to distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. Allowance of rewritten claim 1 is respectfully requested.

Objection to Claim 21 under 37 CFR 1.75(c).

Claim 21 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. The Examiner states that the method by which a cut surface is cut, in this case "laser-cut", does not change the structure of the apparatus and therefore does not further limit the parent claim. Based on the Examiner's assertion that "laser-cut" does not further limit "cut surface", claim 21 is cancelled herein thereby rendering the objection moot.

Rejection of Claims 13, 16 and 18-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b).

Claims 13, 16 and 18-22 (sic, applicant believes the Examiner intended "Claims 13-16 and 18-22") were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Rosen, U.S. Patent 4,009,981.

Applicant submits that claims 13-16, 18-20 as amended herein and newly added claims 23-26 are not anticipated by the art of record, including the art relied upon in the 102(b) rejection.

Rewritten independent claim 13 is drawn to a pressure box for thermoforming a heated sheet of thermoforming material against a mold. The pressure box includes a top plate and side and end plates extending downwardly below the top plate. A resilient circumferential seal on the bottom of the pressure box forms a seal when the pressure box is pressed against a heated sheet for thermoforming the sheet. At least one of the plates includes first and second plate members, each plate member having a wall. The walls face each other and define a slot open at the lower end of the plate. A resilient sealing member is in the slot immediately adjacent the slot walls wherein the walls constrain the sealing member when thermoforming a sheet (emphasis added). A connection detachably holds the first and second plate members together, whereby the plate members can be separated for inserting the sealing member in the slot or removing the sealing member from the slot.

Rosen discloses a pressure box in which a sealing member 97 is in a slot 97' in a front plate 78 (see Figure 6). The sealing member is immediately adjacent the walls of the slot 97'. The slot walls are permanently connected together; there is no teaching or suggestion of a connection detachably holding plate members defining the slot as recited in rewritten claim 13.

Rewritten independent claim 16 is drawn to a pressure box for

thermoforming a heated sheet of thermoforming material against a mold. The pressure box includes a resilient circumferential seal on the bottom of the pressure box. A sealing member has an end surface that forms a portion of the seal and normally has a three-dimensional shape when the end surface is unstressed. The end surface faces and conforms to a three-dimensional shape of the portion of the mold pressed by the end surface to form a three-dimensional seal when thermoforming a sheet.

Rosen discloses a pressure box in which a sealing member 97 has a flat surface facing the mold that forms part of the seal. The seal surface is a 2-dimensional surface, not a 3-dimensional surface as recited in rewritten claim 16.

For the reasons stated above, allowance of independent claims 13 and 16 is respectfully requested. Because dependent claims 14, 15, 17-20, and 23-26 depend from allowable claims, allowance of the dependent claims is also respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claim 17 Under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Rosen 4,009,981 in view of Stofko 4,504,205.

Claim 17 depends from an allowable rewritten claim 16. Allowance of claim 17 is respectfully requested.

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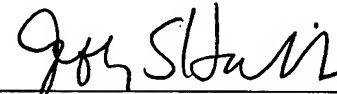
Conclusion.

Applicant respectfully submits that, as amended, the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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